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THE GULL
MONTHLY BULLETIN

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY INC.

Volume 42 Berkeley, California, July 1960 Number 7

MAY TRIP TO KLAMATH BASIN WILDLIFE REFUGES

Over the Memorial Day weekend, May 28, 29 and 30, fourteen members and guests initiated a first for the society by visiting Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges near the Oregon line. Through the courtesy of Mr. Robert F. Russell, manager of Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge, and his assistants, Mr. Jean F. Branson and Mr. Lynn Howard, the group was given a conducted tour of Lower Klamath Refuge and Tule Lake Refuge.

Beginning at 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 28, Lynn Howard escorted the group through the Lower Klamath Refuge over several miles of levee roads where there were many waterfowl in spring plumage in the flooded areas. Eared Grebes were everywhere in their spring dress, which is very striking and entirely different from what we see in the fall and winter in the Bay Area. The spectacular courtship of the Western Grebe was a thrilling sight, too. We were amused by a close, defensive formation of 50 White Pelicans swimming away from us. Many Canada Geese with young swam away from the shorelines of the levees as the caravan of cars approached. We visited a colony of nesting California and Ring-billed Gulls. Some birds appeared to be sitting on nests while others were tending to their chicks. Excellent views of Wilson's Phalaropes, and the beautiful spring plumage of the females, were had from the levee banks in several places. In addition, about 8000 Northern Phalaropes, probably late migrants, were counted in one flock. An oddity that came in for much study was an albino Coot in with a group of the garden-variety black ones.

At 9 a.m. on Sunday, May 29, Lynn Howard again took us in tow and guided us over several miles of levee roads in the Tule Lake Refuge. Here we had the thrill of seeing White-faced Ibis for the first time. We saw them both in flight and feeding in a large drainage canal. Good views of American Bittern were had as they stood on top of heavy growth of tules. Long-billed Marsh Wrens and Yellowthroats, often heard in tule growth but hard to see, were in plain view as they came to the tops of the undergrowth to sing. Yellow-headed and Tricolored Blackbirds were all over this area. We saw a colony of nesting Great Blue Heron and Common and Snowy Egret in the distance.

The Klamath Basin contains many cliffs where swallows, swifts and hawks are found. Tree, Bank, Barn and Cliff Swallows were seen flying about the cliffs in great numbers. A pair of Prairie Falcon thrilled us as they flew, calling, back and forth from an apparent nesting site high on one of the cliffs.

This region had had cold weather and rain up to the weekend that our group arrived, so some late migrants were still present, such as Snow Goose, Black-and-White Warbler (a rare bird for California),

one oldsquaw female (seen at close range), Northern Phalarope, and Osprey (at upper Klamath). A Bald Eagle was seen at Tule Lake Refuge and again at Upper Klamath Lake. Chukar was seen for the first time by many members at the headquarters feeding pens for crippled birds.

In the evening of Sunday, May 29, a talk accompanied by slides was given by Lynn Howard, showing some of the operations of wildlife management at the refuge. Jean F. Branson was also present and extended an invitation to us to return in the fall just before shooting season to see the great masses of waterfowl that congregate here.

On Monday, May 30, a short visit was made by some of us to Upper Klamath Refuge, where groups of Canada Geese, White Pelicans and egrets were found. The shoreline here is forested so some land birds were noted.

The members of the Golden Gate Audubon Society and their friends greatly appreciated the hospitality extended to them by the refuge staff and the time they so generously gave to the group.

The following 120 species were observed at or near the three refuge sites: Eared, Western and Pied-billed Grebe; White Pelican; Double-crested Cormorant; Great Blue Heron; Common and Snowy Egret; Black-crowned Night Heron; American Bittern; White-faced Ibis; Canada, White-fronted, and Snow Goose; Mallard; Gadwall; Pintail; Blue-winged and Cinnamon Teal; Shoveler;American Widgeon; Redhead; Canvasback; Lesser Scaup; Bufflehead; Oldsquaw; Ruddy Duck; Common Merganser; Turkey Vulture; Red-tailed and Swainson's Hawk; Golden and Bald Eagle; Marsh Hawk; Osprey; Prairie and Peregrine Falcon; Sparrow Hawk; Chukar; California and Mountain Quail; Ring-necked Pheasant; Virginia Rail; American Coot; Killdeer; Long-billed Curlew; Spotted Sandpiper; Willet; Long-billed Dowitcher; American Avocet; Black-necked Stilt; Wilson's and Northern Phalarope; California and Ring-billed Gull; Forster's, Caspian and Black Tern; Mourning Dove; Barn, Great Horned and Short-eared Owl; Red-shafted Flicker; Lewis' Woodpecker; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker; Downy Woodpecker; Western Kingbird; Black and Say's Phoebe; Hammond's Flycatcher; Western Wood Pewee; Olive-sided Flycatcher; Horned Lark; Tree, Bank, Barn and Cliff Swallow; Steller's and Scrub Jay; Black-billed Magpie; Common Raven; Common Crow; Black-capped and Mountain Chickadee; Long-billed, Canyon and Rock Wren; Sage Thrasher; Robin; Hermit Thrush; Cedar Waxwing; Loggerhead Shrike; Solitary Vireo; Black-and-White, Orange-crowned, Yellow and Audubon's Warbler; Yellowthroat; Wilson's Warbler; House Sparrow; Western Meadowlark; Yellow-headed, Redwinged and Tricolored Blackbird; Bullock's Oriole; Brewer's Blackbird; Brown-headed Cowbird; Western Tanager; Black-headed Grosbeak; Lazuli Bunting; Purple and House Finch; Green-tailed and Rufous-sided Towhee; Savannah, Vesper, Lark, Chipping, Brewer's and Song Sparrow.

HAROLD G. PETERSON, Leader and Historian

MAY FLOWER TRIP TO SANTA LUCIA MOUNTAINS

To choose a date in January for a flower trip to be taken in May is a risky thing at best. But, always optimistic, 21 Golden Gate enthusiasts met in Hollister Saturday, May 14, for our trip. Before leaving the Hollister town park we examined a Ginkgo tree. Now widespread as a street and park tree, the Ginkgo is a native of China and the sole descendant of a tribe of conifers of ancient geologic times. A common name is maidenhair tree.

The higher hills of the inner coast range are made up of a vegetational pattern similar in some ways to the Sierra foothills. The trees consist for the most part of Douglas oak (Quercus Douglasii) with rounded crown and blue-green leaves, and the graceful digger pine (Pinus Sabiniana). Intermingling with these are the many shrubs and herbaceous plants, the latter group varying greatly in the coastal hills from those found in the Sierran foothills. Although the grassy hills leading into Pinnacles National Monument were already dry, a few interesting plants seen included golden ear-drops (Dicentra chrysantha), scarlet bugler (Penstemon centranthifolius), a plant common in southern California but rarely found farther north than our trip region, wooly blue-curls (Trichostema lanatum), a beautiful member of the Mint Family, and a parasitic plant, dodder (Cuscuta), that attracted everyone's attention because of its abundance and bright yellow color and growing on the shrubby buckwheat Eriogonum fasciculatum. The most showy plants of the first day included elderberry in full bloom, a member of the Honeysuckle Family, and the tobacco tree (Nicotiana glabra) a long stemmed, yellow-flowered member of the Nightshade Family.

After a picnic lunch in the Pinnacles, we had a short botany lesson to point out important plant characteristics to observe for field determinations. This was followed by a couple of short walks in the monument that added not only flowers to our list but also a hummingbird nest complete with family. The party then divided, some remaining to camp at the Pinnacles and the rest driving on to King City, a beautiful trip through the rolling hills shadowed by the late afternoon sun. Dinner in King City will not soon be forgotten by those who took part in the "Bar Plate Special."

Sunday, May 15, our campers joined us in King City, plus reinforcements who came only for the day into the rugged Santa Lucias. With 12 cars and 31 people we started for Jolon on a mountain road that rapidly leaves the Salinas valley and winds steeply into the wilderness of the mountains. Any lack of flowers on Saturday was more than compensated for on Sunday. Everywhere above 2000 ft. elevation the hills were green, meadows still wet, and fields of flowers as far as the eye could see. Purple lupines, red owl's clover, and golden poppies mixed together in a riotous mosaic of color. At Jolon one of the famous endemic plants of this region was in full bloom, purple soap plant (Chlorogalum purpureum), a rare member of the Lily Family. Near Jolon everyone enjoyed roaming around the old San Antonio Mission and grounds. Indeed, it was difficult to persuade the group that better things still lay ahead.

A main objective of the trip was to see another plant endemic to the Santa Lucias, the Santa Lucia fir (Abies bracteata). Although extensive forest stands of these handsome firs occurs much higher, we saw several trees in the canyon above and below the lunch spot. Our Lord's Candles (Yucca whipplei) lined the narrow road. And again the shrubby plants put on a spectacular show. Deer Brush (Ceanothus integgerimus) plus other species of Ceanothus, chaparral pea (Pickeringia montana), yerba santa (Eriodictyon crassifolium and E. californicum) bush monkey flower (Mimulus longiflorus). A stunning bush of prickly poppy (Argemone munita) in full bloom and growing only inches from the ruts of the road itself stopped us cold while cameras came out and photographers vied for position. Clematis, both flowers and the feathery masses of fruits, clambered over bushes and trees. And always as a background for this flowery display was the equally

spectacular scenery of this wild country with its deep canyons and impenetrable bush-clad slopes.

Naming only the more conspicuous plants that were seen, the leader listed 130 plants in flower, far from a complete list. There isn't room to name them all here but some that should be included as a record besides those already named are: tree poppy (Dendromecon rigida), Chorizanthe douglasii, crimson sage (Salvia spathacea), satin bells (Calochortus albus), wild onion (Allium sp.), wall flower (Erysimum capitatum), Gilia splendens, Clarkia elegans, Chinese houses (Collinsia, 3 spp.). Besides the Santa Lucia fir, three interesting trees included a closed cone pine (Pinus attenuata) on the ridge above the Memorial Camp, Coulter pine (Pinus coulteri) in the same canyon, and in the Pinnacles area a belt of California juniper (Juniperus californica). GLADYS L. SMITH, Leader and Historian

MAY TRIP TO YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

During the weekend of May 21 and 22, about 35 members and friends birded in the Yosemite area. The weather was clear (but freezing cold at night), and the waterfalls were at their best.

On Saturday morning we visited the nesting site of a Pygmy Owl, and everyone had an excellent chance to study him at leisure as he watched us from his hole. A bird of lively curiosity, this little owl comes and looks out whenever anyone taps on his tree. At Rocky Point we all saw the tiny Calliope Hummingbird, a male that sat on the shrubbery near us and displayed his red and white gorget.

We went up to Glacier Point in the afternoon, where we had very good views of a Blue Grouse that was calling from a fir tree. It is a bird that few of the group had seen much. The highlight of the trip came when we located a Great Gray Owl hunting along the edge of Peregoy Meadows on the Glacier Point Road. This large owl is one of the rarest of the North American owls. Its range in California is restricted to the vicinity of a few meadows in the high country in Yosemite National Park. The bird was a life bird for almost everyone present; and we were able to study it well as it changed from one perch to another and studied us, in turn, with its large yellow eyes. Also in the vicinity of this meadow, several people were lucky enough to see the rare Black-backed Three-Toed Woodpecker.

On Sunday we went up to Crane Flats and White Wolf. We saw a Golden Eagle at White Wolf and a pair of Williamson's Sapsuckers. Later in the afternoon we spotted another Great Gray Owl, sitting on a fallen log in the middle of one of the meadows at Crane Flats.

Besides the Great Gray Owl, we almost added another--and even much rarer--bird to our life list. What at first was believed to be a penguin (adult in good plumage, but species unidentified), waddling along was sighted on the valley floor by Gladys W. Thomas. As Yosemite is rather far out of the normal range of this flightless bird--even with the heavy ice flow on the river--Mrs. Thomas cautiously moved closer. Careful study revealed an immature Homo Sapiens (male?) in a smart black and white snow outfit.

The following 75 species were identified during the weekend: Accipiter (sp?); Red-tailed Hawk; Golden Eagle; Sparrow Hawk; Blue Grouse; California Quail; Spotted Sandpiper; Band-tailed Pigeon; Mourning Dove; Great Horned, Pygmy, and Great Gray Owl; Black Vaux's, and White-throated Swift; Calliope Hummingbird; Belted Kingfisher; Red-shafted Flicker; Acorn Woodpecker; Yellow-bellied

and Williamson's Sapsucker; Hairy, Downy, White-headed and Black-backed Three-Toed Woodpecker; Hammond's and Dusky Flycatcher (Identified by their habitat); Western Wood Pewee; Olive-sided Flycatcher; Violet-green and Rough-winged Swallow; Steller's and Scrub Jay; Mountain Chickadee; White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatch; Brown Creeper; Dipper; House and Canyon Wren; Robin; Hermit Thrush; Mountain Bluebird; Townsend's Solitaire; Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglet; Solitary and Warbling Vireo; Orange-crowned, Nashville, Yellow, Audubon's, Black-throated Gray, Hermit, MacGillivray's, and Wilson's Warbler; House Sparrow; Red-winged Blackbird; Bullock's Oriole; Brewer's Blackbird; Brown-headed Cowbird; Western Tanager; Black-headed and Evening Grosfous-sided Towhee; Oregon Junco; Chipping, White-crowned, Fox, Lincoln's and Song Sparrow.

In addition, the following mammals were seen: Black Bear; Coyote; California Ground, Golden mantled, and Western Gray Squirrel; Chickaree; Chipmunk; Mule Deer.

R. G. McCASKIE, Leader and Historian

JUNE TRIP TO SAN FRANCISCO BEACH

On the foggy Saturday of June 4 a small party of us visited San Francisco ocean beach to observe the Bank Swallow colony at the height of its nesting season. On the way, we walked through the Fleishhacker Pool area where there are a number of nesting Cliff Swallows which made it handy for us to compare nest structure.

Few species are present at the beach in June. The usual pair of Belted Kingfishers was missing this year; even the Sanderlings were absent on Saturday. But the activity of the swallows was about at its peak. At two locations in the sandy bluffs at the foot of Fort Funston, about 100 pairs of Bank Swallows and 2 pairs of Rough-winded Swallows were seen in nearly every stage of the nesting cycle. A few were still digging their burrows, sending out small showers of sand. Some were carrying feathers into the holes for nest materials. At other burrows there was relative quiet where incubation was probably still in progress; but most of the birds were feeding young, a number of which could be seen in the openings.

Offshore at a distance was a flight of about 10 Common Murres and, well beyond the breakers, 100+Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorants, evidently concentrated at a source of good fishing.

The following 19 species were observed on this day: Loon (1 -- sp?); Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorant; White-winged and Surf Scoter; Sparrow Hawk; Killdeer; Western Gull; Common Murre; Pigeon Guillemot; Mourning Dove; Bank, Rough-winged, and Cliff Swallow; Robin; House Sparrow; Brewer's Blackbird; House Finch; Pine Siskin.

NOTE: Those of you who visited the Bank Swallows may be interested to know that 12 hours or less after your visit there was a landslide at the northern colony, and within another 24 hours a second slide at the southern colony. About a quarter of each was destroyed. New burrows are already under way at the southern area, but only the two pairs of Rough-winged Swallows remain at the first site.

BETSEY D. CUTLER, Leader and Historian

MAY TRIP TO UPPER ARROYO MOCHO AND MINES ROAD CUT-OFF TO PATTERSON

On the morning of Saturday, May 7, about 20 members and friends met at the flagpole in Livermore for a trip to an area that has never been covered before on a Golden Gate field trip.

We went through the lower Arroyo Mocho, making our first stop at the bridge just before the long up-grade on the Mines road. Phainopepla and a few new spring arrivals were seen here. With only two other major stops, we made it to the Patterson cut-off by noon. Here we had a big disappointment, when we were told in no uncertain terms by an employee of the owner that we could not go on her land without paying a dollar for each car. The concensus of the group was to pass up the possibilities of Black-chinned, Sage, and Black-throated Sparrows that are found in that area, and to take the road that leads to Patterson in hopes of some other good birding.

When we arrived at the first nesting rock for Cliff Swallows, we found what is probably a localized breeding colony of Costa's Hummingbirds. At least two males, and probably more, were nearly 250 miles out of their normal range. Nestling Black Phoebes were banded and also seen leaving the nest. A Great Horned Owl was flushed from its nest in the cliff.

The following 80 species were seen on the trip; Turkey Vulture; Sharp-shinned and Red-tailed Hawk; Golden Eagle, Sparrow Hawk; California Quail; Killdeer; Band-tailed Pigeon; Mourning Dove; Great Horned Owl; White-throated Swift; Costa's, Anna's, and Allen's Hummingbird; Belted Kingfisher; Red-shafted Flicker; Acorn, Hairy, Downy, and Nuttall's Woodpecker; Western Kingbird; Ash-throated Flycatcher; Black and Say's Phoebe; Western Flycatcher; Western Wood Pewee; Olive-sided Flycatcher; Violet-green, Tree, Rough-winged, Barn, and Cliff Swallow; Scrub Jay; Yellow-billed Magpie; Common Raven; Common Crow; Plain Titmouse; Common Bushtit; White-breasted Nuthatch; Wrentit; House, Bewicks, Canon, and Rock Wren; Mockingbird; Robin; Western Bluebird; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher; Cedar Waxwing; Phainopepla; Loggerhead Shrike; Starling; Hutton's and Warbling Vireo; Orange-crowned, Yellow, and Wilson's Warbler; House Sparrow; Western Meadowlark; Redwinged Blackbird; Bullock's Oriole; Brewer's Blackbird; Brown-headed Cowbird; Western Tanager; Black-headed Grosbeak; Lazuli Bunting; Purple and House Finch; American and Lesser Goldfinch; Rufous-sided and Brown Towhee; Lark and Rufous-crowned Sparrow; Oregon Junco, Chipping, White-crowned, Golden-crowned, and Song Sparrow.

RICHARD STALLCUP, Leader and Historian

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CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS, 1960, were granted to Audubon Camp of California by Piedmont Garden Club to Mrs. Jan Bingham, Miss Genevieve Smith of Piedmont Elementary Schools; by Golden Gate Audubon Society to Mr. William de Fremery, councilor, Alameda Boys' Camp; Mrs. R. L. Lewis, Girl Scout Camp Director; Mrs. Bonnie McClennan, laboratory assistant, Diablo Valley College; Mrs. Mary Jane Nemetz, science worker, Walnut Creek Elementary School; Miss Grace Sandbeck, elementary teacher, Oakland. Congratulations!!

EDITOR'S NOTE: As you have probably noticed, The Gull has changed its flight plans. Instead of regular printing we are now having it done by the offset printing method. This, with the new mailing method, will save the Society quite a few dollars in the future. The new printing method will make it possible to include pictures within a few months at little extra cost. I welcome your comments on this new format.

For the August and September issues Miss Aileen Pierson, the Assistant Editor, will take over the reins of The Gull. She would much appreciate it if the field trip leaders would send in material to her by the 10th of the month, while the regular deadline is the 15th. Have a good vacation! The Editor

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following members to the Golden Gate Audubon Society: from Berkeley, Mr. David P. Snyder; from San Leandro, Mr. Richard A. McFarland; from San Francisco, Mr. & Mrs. Robert D. Shallman, and Mr. & Mrs. John C. Smith.

AGNES OCZKEWCZ, Membership Chairman

JULY MEETING -- PICNIC SUPPER

The 509th regular meeting of the Golden Gate Audubon Society will be held on Thursday, July 14, after a six o'clock picnic supper, at Live Oak Park in Berkeley (Shattuck Avenue at Berryman Street). Fireplace No. 2, across Walnut Street, from the park building, has been reserved for us.

Members who have been traveling are invited to share the highlights of their observations for the outdoor program, BIRDING FAR AFIELD. We are hoping that Paul Covel, just back from Europe, will be with us.

Come! Everyone - and bring friends!! Bring also the picnic supper. ANNOUNCEMENT: There will be no regular meeting in August. Happy Vacation to everyone! We shall meet again on Thursday, September 8. Eric and Laurel Reynolds have again offered their home for the Audubon Camp Scholarship Benefit. Details in next month's Gull.

BONNIE SMITH, Program Chairman

FIELD TRIPS FOR JULY

On Saturday and Sunday, July 16 and 17, to Audubon Camp area at Sugar Bowl and Boca Reservoir. The Sugar Bowl offers many interesting spots for field trips for nature study. Several of these will be taken on Saturday. Boca Reservoir, a habitat for desert and water birds, will be visited on Sunday. Sage Thrasher, Vesper, Black-throated and Brewer's Sparrow were seen on last year's field trip.

Meet at the eastern tip of Lake Van Norden at 10 a.m. on Saturday. This point can be reached by turning off Highway 40 at Soda Springs. After assembling the group will go to the Sugar Bowl Lodge and other points of interest. Because of limited parking space at the lodge, it was not chosen as the meeting place.

There are many good camp sites at Big Bend and Hampshire Rocks, U.S. Forest Service camps west of the summit and at Donner Memorial Park east of the summit. Leadership will be available for a proposed dry camp east of Boca Reservoir on Saturday night. There are no designated camp sites. Bring your own water supply. Immediately before and after sunrise is an ideal time for birding in the desert. Those not camping in the desert meet on Sunday at 9 a.m. at the eastern end of the Boca Reservoir dam.

The distance to Sugar Bowl from the Bay Area is about 200 miles and driving time about 5 hours.

LEADER, CHARLES HINES - OVerland 1-0935

On Saturday, July 30, to Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. Members who visit the park regularly have found many interesting birds around the arboretum, the conservatory and the adjoining fern canyons. For this trip we will meet at 8th Avenue and Fulton Street at 9 a.m. Bring binoculars, lunch and interested friends.

LEADER, FLORENCE PLYMELL - PRospect 6-1208

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